

Work Session of the Common Council  
Of the City of Plattsburgh, New York  
February 6th, 2014, 5:00PM

Present: Mayor James Calnon, Councilors Rachelle Armstrong (W1), Mike Kelly (W2), Dale Dowdle (W3), Paul O'Connell (W4), Becky Kasper (W5), Joshua Kretser (W6)

Mayor Calnon opened the meeting with the good news announcement of the 3 million dollar funding boost for the South Catherine street renovation. City Engineer Kevin Farrington reported that this work could be completed by the end of the year, and when asked how this would affect the N. Margaret street project, replied that it would have no impact on it.

An open forum with the public concerning the waterfront development commenced with Councilor Kretser thanking the public for attending: "regional experts and those who have ideas, visions and plans."

Discussants:

Bob Smith, Vision 2 Action: Need for a community master plan, including integration of bike paths and trails. Need for flexibility for off-season, kiosks, plot large enough for farmers' market. 15 year lease is not sufficient for business investment. Need more space for the marina. We should invest in an rfp to say this is for community public access, merchandise, perhaps a bandshell.

Tim McCormick: Successful lakefront boating center has maximum footage for boats, not minimum. City should provide services that private companies cannot. Should be availability of storage of kayaks, a conference space, classrooms.

Phil Von Bargaen: Town of Plattsburgh Planning Board: Reported on ToP 50k for waterfront plan, SRT. Indicated opportunity for collaboration in the planning process.

Ty Kretser: Has long-time relationship with lake, avid sail racer and has traveled extensively. Public structures and facilities are centerpiece of a successful marina. Need for publically funded with rental properties re-couping investment. There are public and private foundations for funding, need for research. Could have a boathouse, and archway. It's not just about boats and docks.

Councilor Kasper: Emphasize need for public funding for community ownership, revenue opportunities like the Valcour conference center.

Tim Mihuc, LCRI, SUNY: Get research boat to waterfront, education center, bring in people, e.g. Montreal's bio-dome. Need a major draw to bring in tourists with public funding.

Councilor Kelly: Common thread of discussion is to open up to the community and conducting business here. Thanks Josh for inviting everyone.

Councilor Kretser: We all want input, and we should be considering increasing the number of fishing tournaments.

Kristy Kennedy, Chamber of Commerce: Fishing tournaments can work into development; need to keep them in mind.

Councilor Kretser: Destination Master Plan is key.

Councilor Armstrong: There is value in planning, and in cooperation with the Town. Sticking point concerns advocates for idea that we need place for smaller boats, and suitability for part of the lakefront for larger boats. Create small vessel marina at Wilcox Dock as it is a sheltered area. There are a variety of ways to put all ideas together.

Councilor Kasper: We really need to move forward on integrated planning. Can't leave people feeling that we just talk and will do nothing. We can get things done.

Councilor O'Connell: Noted last week's decision was based on input from Ward residents. Need for the marina to be a year round project with ice-fishing opportunities and derbies. Preference for max footage regulations rather than minimum. Should progress with phases of the plan starting with the moorings and developing pieces such as a gazebo and farmers' market. Dredging for Wilcox Dock as it is shallow. Requires permission for work at Wilcox. Need for a Community Development office for grant research.

Bob Smith: Exciting to see collaboration happening, keep up the good work.

Trevor Cole: Need to look at scale of project – whom do you want to serve?

Councilor Dowdle: Scale is important. We should build on strengths and not copy other developments. Tier 1 grant is for 26+ ft. boats. Median income of the region is 36k, 20k Plattsburgh population, 80k county. Be careful to not develop in a manner that puts other businesses at a disadvantage.

Councilor Kasper: The ideal of capitalism is competition in an open market that serves to elevate the services businesses provide.

Mayor Calnon: Need to think about larger concepts. Is there a market for 26+ ft. boats? Possibilities for use of land at the tank farm on N. Cumberland, or the land across from Wilcox Dock. Grant stipulates transient boats, 10 days or fewer.

Councilor Kelly: Compare ourselves to Burlington when it is doing something right. They have different moorings for different size boats. Why can't we tie the city together? Ties the bike paths, come on a boat – go to the City beach. Plant grass on the brownfield site for picnic grounds. Take incremental steps.

Jerry Renadette, Plattsburgh Town Council: ToP is ready to work collaboratively with the City in planning and development.

Jean Mockry: Has the council considered assistance from SUNY Plattsburgh? Alliance with College and across the border. Great appreciation for the work of the Council and the open exchange.

Councilor Kasper: Yes, the city is beginning to take more steps to be allies with College, for instance we are considering taking on an intern, and the College's new Center for Public Service will be offering new ways for that alliance to be deepened.

Mayor Calnon: Sees the possibility for some action items. First need to get more information, talk to Phil and Kevin about master planning and put some action items together.